

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 03910 151912Z

63

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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USMISSION BERLIN

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AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

USMISSION GENEVA

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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 03910 151912Z

USIA FOR IOP, IBS, IPS, IEU

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TAGS: PFOR, UR, US

SUBJECT: SOVIET PRESS ON U.S.- SOVIET RELATIONS

1. SUMMARY. THE SOVIET PRESS CONTINUES ITS ADVOCACY OF DETENTE, BUT RATHER DEFENSIVELY. IT HAS AGAIN ASSURED ITS READERS THAT THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION TO DROP THE WORD "DETENTE" IS NOT SIGNIFICANT, AND HAS HURRIED (AS HAS NATIONAL TV) TO REPORT THE PRESIDENT'S ASSURANCE THAT IF HE IS ELECTED, THE SECRETARY WILL REMAIN IN OFFICE. BUT CALLS FOR VIGILANCE AGAINST THE "ENEMIES OF DETENTE" IN THE U.S. AND WARNINGS ABOUT THE DANGERS OF USING ATTACKS ON DETENTE IN THE U.S. ELECTION CAMPAIGN ARE BECOMING MORE STRIDENT. AND SOVIET MEDIA COVERAGE OF U.S. IS INCREASINGLY TOUGH--EVEN BY RECENT UNFLATTERING STANDARDS (SEE ALSO SOVIET PRESS SUMMARY REPORTED SEPTEL). END SUMMARY.

2. ADVOCACY OF A DETENTE POLICY IN RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. CONTINUES FIRM IN AUTHORITATIVE COLUMNS IN THE SOVIET PRESS--BUT THE DEFENSIVE CHARACTER OF THIS ADVOCACY IS UNMISTAKABLE. PRAVDA'S AUTHORITATIVE WEEKLY INTERNATIONAL REVIEW (KORIONOV) ON MARCH 14 ACKNOWLEDGES THE "ALMOST OFFICIAL STATEMENT" MADE IN THE U.S. CALLING THE TERM "DETENTE" TOO NARROW TO DESCRIBE THE COMPLEX U.S.--SOVIET RELATIONSHIP, BUT HURRIES TO ASSURE ITS READERS THAT THE PUBLIC "WAS INFORMED" THAT THIS CHANGE DID NOT SIGNIFY A CHANGE IN THE SUBSTANCE OF THE POLICY. THE SOVIET NATIONAL EVENING NEWS TELEVISION PROGRAM MARCH 14 QUICKLY PICKED UP THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT IN GREENSBORO THAT, IF RETURNED TO OFFICE, HE WILL RETAIN THE SECRETARY IN THE CABINET--LEAVING THE LISTENER TO CONCLUDE ON HIS OWN THAT IF THE SECRETARY CONTINUES IN OFFICE DETENTE WILL SURELY CONTINUE AS THE U.S. POLICY. PRAVDA MARCH 15 REPORTS THIS STATEMENT BRIEFLY, BUT PROMINENTLY, ADDING THAT THE PRESIDENT BELIEVES THAT THE SECRETARY IS "JUSTIFIED" IN REBUTTING ATTACKS FROM REAGAN AND SENATOR JACKSON. IZVESTIYA'S KONDRASHOV, ANALYZING THE PRIMARIES IN IZVESTIYA MARCH 13, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 03910 151912Z

CONCLUDES THAT PERHAPS THE MAIN TENDENCY SO FAR EVIDENT IS THE "SHARP REDUCTION" IN REAGAN'S CHANCES. KONDRASHOV REPORTS THAT REAGAN'S ATTACKS ON DETENTE ARE APPARENTLY NOT PLEASING TO THE VOTERS. ANOTHER IZVESTIYA CORRESPONDENT IN THE SAME ISSUE REPORTS ON HIS VISIT TO FULTON, MISSOURI, ON THE THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHURCHILL SPEECH, CONTENDING THAT THE DECREASING NUMBER OF TOURISTS COMING TO VISIT THE SITE OF THE SPEECH--NOW ALMOST NONE--

SHOWS THE OBSOLESCENCE OF THE "IRON CURTAIN" APPROACH IN TODAY'S AMERICA. AND PRAVDA MARCH 13 PRINTS THE LATEST IN A LONG, LONG SERIES OF BRIEF ITEMS ON CONTINUING INTEREST IN U.S. BUSINESS CIRCLES IN TRADE WITH THE SOVIET UNION.

3. EVEN AT TIMES WHEN U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS HAVE BEEN IN FULL FLOWER, COMMENTARIES SUCH AS THE ABOVE HAVE ALWAYS CONTAINED SOME WARNING, SOMETIMES IMPLICIT BUT USUALLY EXPLICIT, THAT THERE ARE CONTRADICTIONS IN THE RELATIONSHIP WHICH MAKE IT SUSCEPTIBLE TO CHANGE, AND THAT HIGH VIGILANCE IS NECESSARY TO ENSURE THAT ANY SUCH CHANGE FAVORS SOVIET INTERESTS. THESE "WARNING CLAUSES" ARE NOT SO PROMINENT AND SO PROTRUDING THAT THEY DOMINATE THE ARTICLES IN WHICH THEY ARE IMPLANTED. PRAVDA'S INTERNATIONAL REVIEW ON MARCH 14 DEVOTES A BRIEF PARAGRAPH TO EXPLAINING THAT DROPPING OF THE WORD "DETENTE" DOES NOT MEAN A REJECTION OF THE POLICY, BUT THEN DEVOTES THREE LONGER PARAGRAPHS TO CRITICISM OF: (1) THE PENTAGON--OR RATHER OF SECRETARY RUMSFELD (WITHOUT NAMING HIM)--FOR SAYING THAT "DETENTE DOES NOT MEAN PEACE, DOES NOT MEAN FRIENDSHIP, NOR DOES IT MEAN TRUST"; (2) REPRESENTATIVE BIAGGIO FOR CALLING FOR AN END TO THE POLICY OF DETENTE "ONCE AND FOR ALL"; AND (3) "THE WESTERN PRESS" FOR THE "PROVOCATORY TEMPEST IN A TEAPOT" ALLEGING THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS STEPPING UP THE ARMS RACE. ALL OF THIS IS THE REASON, THE COLUMN CONTENDS, THAT THE SOVIET UNION AND ITS ALLIES "ARE SO VIGILANTLY WATCHING THE EFFORTS OF THE ENEMIES OF PEACE AND THE FREEDOM OF PEOPLES TO TURN BACK THE COURSE OF WORLD EVENTS...WHICH ARE TOO IMPORTANT TO BE SUBORDINATED TO TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN DOMESTIC POLITICAL AFFAIRS".

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PAGE 04 MOSCOW 03910 151912Z

4. OTHER COVERAGE ON THE U.S. IS SHARPLY CRITICAL. IN ADDITION TO THE ANTI-AMERICANA WE HAVE REPORTED IN OUR SUMMARY OF THE SOVIET PRESS (SEPTTEL), THE CENTRAL PRESS MARCH 13 REPRINTED IN FULL THE TEXT OF THE SOVIET NOTE HANDED TO THE AMBASSADOR MARCH 12 PROTESTING THE "INACTIVITY" OF U.S. AUTHORITIES WHICH ALLEGEDLY HAS ALLOWED PERPETRATORS OF TERRORIST ATTACKS ON SOVIET INSTITUTIONS IN THE U.S. TO ESCAPE UNPUNISHED. ELABORATING ON THIS THEME, A CARTOON IN PRAVDA MARCH 15 PORTRAYS A NEW YORK POLICEMAN SMILING BENIGNLY IN THE OTHER DIRECTION AS HOOLIGANS WEARING STARS OF DAVID RUN BY WITH BOMBS AND GUNS IN THEIR HANDS. THE SHADOW CAST BY THE POLICEMAN ON THE WALL BEHIND HIM IS THAT OF A GERMAN IMPERIAL EAGLE WAHTMHNG A HIGH-PEAKED CAP--THE USUAL SYMBOLISM FOR NAZISM. IZVESTIYA ON MARCH 13 CARRIES A COMMENTARY

BY V. KUKUSHKIN ("FILTHY FOAM ON THE RADIO WAVES")
WHICH IS LONG ENOUGH TO RATE SUBTITLES: "THE AMERICAN
RADIO STATION (I.E., RADIO LIBERTY) DISTURBS DETENTE";
"NAZIIST PARTNERS IN CRIME AND RENEGADES AT THE MICROPHONE,
THEIR MOTTO--ANTISOVETISM, SLANDER OF THE
SOCIALIST SYSTEM"; "THE WORLD PUBLIC DEMANDS THE LIQUIDATION
OF THIS REMNANT OF THE 'COLD WAR'". IN ADDITION
TO THE USUAL CRITICISM OF THE RADIO'S BROADCASTS THEMSELVES,
THE ARTICLE CONTENDS THAT THE RADIO ALSO
UNDERTAKES "SPECIAL PROJECTS" SUCH AS COMPOSING AND
PRINTING SAMIZDAT WORKS IN ITS BASEMENT ("THIS HAS BEEN
ACCURATELY ESTABLISHED...") AND CARRYING OUT ELECTRONIC
EAVESDROPPING AGAINST DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS IN THE FRG.
KUKUSHKIN CONTENDS THAT THE RADIO'S PRESENCE IN THE FRG
VIOLATES (1) THE FRG "CONSTITUTION"; (2) THE POTSDAM
AGREEMENT; AND (3) THE MOSCOW TREATY. STRANGELY, HE
DOES NOT SAY THAT IT VIOLATES CSCE, BUT ONLY THAT THE
RADIO'S LIQUIDATION WOULD ANSWER INTERNATIONAL NORMS, IN
PARTICULAR THOSE CONTAINED IN BASKET III. STOESSEL

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